m. Hirom bṣihṣ (a solatium to the first wife for getting a co-wife).

595 When a married pair do not get children, or a man, only due to licentiousness, or for any reason, gets a co-wife, he cannot, without making his first wife agree to it, bring the co-wife into his house. If the first wife is not willing, she can, standing in the door, meet the co-wife, beating her. There is a customary rule about this. The first wife gets as a solatium for getting a co-wife five rupees or a calf. When she gets this, all three will sit down beside each other in front of the village council, facing the rising of the sun. Husband and wife make the co-wife sit between them on the right side of the man. The man then applies sindur to his first wife, and what is left of the sindur he applies to a ḍimbu flower[67], and with his left hand he sticks this into the hair of the co-wife's head. The first wife manages the house and household.

n. Elopement.

684 When a man and a woman run away to another country to live together, we call this an elopement. A woman who has a husband, or a related woman or girl, whom it is not permissible to marry, such ones they elope with, fearing the husband, or fearing to be outcasted.

If a man runs away with a married woman, they would formerly track them, until they found them, and then cut them down, and none would follow this matter up. Nowadays they make them pay double brideprice and give the woman into charge, and the headman of the village of the eloping man gets five rupees, because he saves his head. And if related persons elope, they outcaste such people. If they do not separate, they will remain outcasted for their whole life, and no one will eat or drink with them, and children of these will not find way down to water (i. e., to be married). If they separate they will "eat them into caste"; but there will be very heavy expenses. If relatives who are prohibited from marrying elope, the parents on both sides will also have to arrange and pay to be "eaten into caste again", they themselves alone; thereby they will be taken into society again. But if they permit the two who eloped to come to their homes, the whole family will be outcasted; and the village people will also be punished, otherwise people will not give them their daughters in marriage either, and will not marry theirs.

To strive after the possession of a married woman and to elope with another man's wife
[563] is somehow customary. If they elope with a person of another race, they remain outcasted for life, these two alone, and the parents get more punishment.

---

[67] Ocymum Basilicum, var. thyrsiflorum, L.

586 not join you two together, but for ever and always, like stone, like rock, until very old and white-haired, — now there is no guilt of ours; then as you two do not suit each other, what can we village people do? Now both of you consider in your heart, take warning for yourselves, otherwise some day in the future you might say about us: these people caused us to separate. Now then, you so and so, if you really will leave her for good, make your appeal to the Day spirit, the Five mountain spirits, the ancestors of old, and tear the leaves, or else, do not tear them.

Thereupon they make him stand on his left leg, and facing the sun-rise they make him raise his hands in supplication. Thereupon they give him three Sal-leaves[*]. He takes these, and with a piece of cloth round his neck he invokes the Day spirit and quickly tears the three leaves along the mid-ribs from the stalk to the top. Thereupon he turns round and with his right foot kicks over the loṭa with water and makes renunciation. And commencing from the village headman he salutes all there. The woman also salutes them in the same way.

[787] If the leaves are not torn straight along the mid-ribs when he tears them, people say, they are likely to meet again. And if the water in the loṭa does not all run out, then also they say, their affection has not been removed, perhaps they will again come together.

p. Outcasting.

684 Only because of two crimes the ancestors have made it a rule for us to outcaste people, viz., sexual intercourse with people of another race or with a non-permissible relative. If
692 anyone misbehaves in such a way, the village headman calls the headmen of the neigh-
696 bouring villages together and informs them. If it is proved, they inform the people of their respective villages saying to them: Don't eat and drink with so and so, or don't in the meantime get into marriage relations with them; otherwise you may be burnt by the same fire. But these people are not able to outcaste them; this is in the hand of the people of the country. Only when the matter is taken to the burnt forest, it is settled. At the council meeting during the hunt of the people of the country they publish the matter. If the Parganas, Dęsmąńjhia, Mąńjhia, and the people of the country do not get proofs, they punish those who have started the matter severely; but if it is proved, they order: Well, we shall fix used leaves in the ground for them. The young men of the country then compose songs, and going to the village they sing praising them and mentioning the names and sins of those who have committed the crime. All the people of the country enter the village street, blowing flutes and drumming kettle-drums, and in the street outside the house of the miscreants they fix in the ground a post to which

[*] Shorea robusta, Gaertn., the sacred tree of the Santals.

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

used leaves, a burnt log of wood and a worn-out broom have been tied. The people of the village will remain included in the pollution, until they give what is needed for propitiation. They worry the miscreant very much. They do not give him fire, nor do they let the people of this house draw water at the common water-fetching place. Great hardship. 684 692 696

If the village headmen meets them with a loṭa with water before the people of the country enter the village street, they do not sing the songs; but in any case they perform the outcasting.

q. Taking into society again.

Outcasted people, who can be taken into society again, do their utmost to provide what is necessary, that they may become members of society again. When they have made the necessary provisions, they inform the village headman, who tells the Pargana. The Pargana informs the Parganas of twelve countries. On the fixed day they assemble in the village. Outside they call a halt. The outcasted people have killed pigs and goats and make a big feast. All is ready. 684 783

Thereupon the outcasted man, having a loṭa with water in his hand, goes to the end of the village street. There he stands with a piece of cloth round his neck, keeping the loṭa with water on the palms of both his hands turned upwards and making supplication, and he looks very miserable and humble. The venerable old Pargana then says to the Parganas of the country and to the collected village headmen: Come along, let us console his soul; he looks very much in need of mercy. He thereupon leads them to the outcasted man. When they reach him, the outcasted man makes his worship to the Day spirit (Sîñ boñga) and says to them: O Father, I have sinned awfully, I acknowledge my fault, have mercy on me. Then the venerable old Pargana (formerly this was the right of the Murmu people) receives the loṭa with water from the hands of the outcasted man, and worshipping the Day spirit he says to the outcasted man: Because you have acknowledged your sin, we have taken over and taken on us all this (sin) of yours. Having rinsed his mouth with a little water he gives the loṭa to the others, to one after the other. All the leading men rinse their mouths with water from the loṭa.

Thereupon they enter the village. There the man washes the feet of all the leading men, in his courtyard. When he has done this, they sit down in rows beside each other to eat. The man thereupon pours rice out on the leaf-plates to them, one after the other. He sprinkles water on them; he gives them curry, and he puts down on their leaf-plates, for each of the Parganas five rupees, and for each of the village headmen one rupee, and for the headman of his own village he puts down five rupees.

Now they eat, and when they have done this, the venerable Pargana says to the people of the country: From to-day we have taken this man in among us as one of ourselves;

2: Skreferud M-9 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

• 684 783 uncleanness and defilement all has been cleared away. Consequently from to-day we shall drink a cup of water of his, we shall also smoke a hookah-bowl of his, we shall also give him a daughter of ours in marriage, his daughters we shall also take; like water in a hollowed-out pit in the river, like water in a pool, we have made all clear and pure. Any one who from to-day mentions this matter anywhere or speaks depreciatingly, him we shall make pay one hundred rupees and make him give one hundred leaf-plates (of cooked rice) as a social punishment. Thereupon they dig a pit, bury balls of cow-dung there and press a stone down on it. Now they salute each other and separate.

2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

624
882

The Jog Mąńjhi is the one in charge of the young men and girls. He has to see to it that no shamelessness shall occur in the village. If anything of this kind occurs and he does not find it out, the village people will tie him with a piece of wood and a halter to a post in the headman's cattle-shed and thrash him, and they will also fine him.

But if the Jog Mąńjhi finds out the misbehaviour of any young man and girl, he will seize the young man and give him into the charge of the village council. If the young man agrees in a council meeting to keep the girl as his wife, they will only fine the father of the young man; but if the young man does not assent to marry, the Jog Mąńjhi will thrash him in the presence of the village council, so that his skin is torn, and they will fine his father heavily. Some people become utter paupers by again and again paying fines for a son.

624
684
882

During the Sohrae all the young men and girls stay for five days in the house of the Jog Mąńjhi, and eat and drink with him, and they also sleep in his house. And if anything should happen, he will have the responsibility.

At the namegiving and social initiating ceremonies and in everything in connexion with marriages the Jog Mąńjhi is to the front. And in connexion with the attendance at the worship of the spirits and at religious festivals he is the leader. The Jog Mąńjhi gets more beer to drink than all others of the village people.

624

Formerly the Jog Mąńjhis were keeping the young men and girls of the village in very strict order; but nowadays they are very careless. The village girls give them much beer to drink; in this way they treat them with their medicine in order that even if the Jog Mąńjhi gets to know something about them he may not reveal it, or, in case they should go astray anyhow, there may not be inflicted too heavy a punishment. The young men also will treat the Jog Mąńjhi, when they get an opportunity; and they will also tell him their respective sins. At such a time the Jog Mąńjhi will say to them: Walk sensibly here with us; you will have to support them; otherwise I shall flog you white.

624
882

The Jog Paranik is the assistant of the Jog Mąńjhi, and when there is no Jog Mąńjhi there, he will do the Jog Mąńjhi's work.

The Godet, by the headman's order, calls the village people together to council meetings. When the spirits are worshipped, he collects the fowls for sacrifice in the village, and if any bundles or the like come to be forwarded, he carries them to the next village. They call the Godet the Big Mąńjhi, because his word is more prevalent in the village, he is like the police. The ancestors have said, it is told, that Marań buru was the Godet of Ṭhąkur. The Godets are very impetous; they are also very greedy. In many places they have robbed the Mąńjhi of his position; they have also become Parganas even. If they become Mąńjhi or Pargana, they will not judge righteously; they act covetously. If the Paranik of a village becomes Mąńjhi, the Godet by right becomes Paranik.

624

The Naeke (the village priest) sacrifices to the village bongas, this is his only work.

793

appeal either. Also a quarrel between husband and wife these wretched fools at once bring 177
in before the European magistrates, a crying shame; the deceitful Indian pleaders cheat 178
them of their money a good deal; they get one another into prison; their mutual hatred 691
remains with them smouldering like hot-pan fire; this is what they have gained by transgressing the customary judgements of the ancestors. Let them take the great crimes to the courts; but what we have from olden times disposed of ourselves, why do they take heaps of such matter to the courts?

b. Concerning witnesses.

From ancient times up to near the present day we Santals did not know false statements; we were stating what we had seen with our eyes, both about enemies and about 177
our brothers and sisters. After the Europeans have come, a few Santals have been judged 178
to be hanged, because they have spoken the truth. There were no witnesses of their crime; 695
if they had lied and denied it, they would have been set free. In our councils we did not bring the witnesses in one by one; we put all the witnesses forward at once; still they did not tell falsehoods. Nowadays they have learnt deceit from the Dekos, and like them they sell their soul and honour for one brass-cup of beer; and as the magistrates do not know our language, they cannot distinguish falsehood from truth; they are only led astray by the words of the deceitful Indians; therefore we do not get just judgements. We would have any fear of the light swearing in the courts? Let them make them swear like the oaths of our ancestors, then they would tremble, fearing for their life, and they would surely not speak falsely. A few magistrates have let a very short oath in our language be made up by some Dekos; but we only laugh at this oath, because what is said aims at the one who administers the oath. They make them swear like this: "Speak the truth; if I speak what is false a tiger spirit will eat thee". The witness repeats this, following him: "Speak the truth; if I speak what is false, a tiger-spirit will eat thee". Why should witnesses have any fear from this?

c. The different kinds of crime. 682

Among the great crimes are the following: To kidnap children, to sacrifice them, to kill 684
a person by carelessness, to rob one of his wife, to rape a woman, forcibly to apply sindur
to a woman. Our punishment for this was death. The kidnappers steal children, or catch 682
a person on the road, and sacrifice them. If they were caught at the moment, they killed them without any judging, and there was no appeal in this case. When some one inadvertently shot and killed somebody during the hunt, the people passed judgement and let the person be killed in return. At such a time they let the man who shot and killed the other, stand where the man was who was shot and killed, and where the man who shot and killed was, there they let a relative of the shot and killed man stand. If he shoots

682 and kills the man who shot and killed from there with one arrow, well and good; otherwise he is set free. And if a man is killed by an arrow passing through an animal, then, in the same way, they let some animal stand, and let the man who shot and killed stand behind the animal, so far away from the animal as the killed one was. If shooting through the animal placed there he kills him, well and good; otherwise he is free.

178 A man who has been robbed of his wife may, without any judgement, kill both on the
684 spot, anywhere he may track and find the two, like a deer in the forest. His relatives will help him tracking them, but he himself will do the killing. Nowadays they do not kill them; but the seducer will have to pay five rupees to save his head.

Those who raped women they also treated in the same way. Also these have nowadays to pay five rupees to save their head, and besides this they fine them as heavily as they can. Mostly they make them pay a score of rupees. They cut off the right hand of a man who forcibly had applied sindur to a woman, and with a spindle they poked out one of his eyes. And there was a separate fine. Nowadays these also have to pay five rupees to save hand and eye; they get a beating and also have to pay a fine. We had no murder without a cause.

178 As to witches, formerly we drove them away after having treated them disgracefully;
683 only now and then have we killed them. Also nowadays they drive them away, and sometimes they also kill them.

But this is not right, because the ancestors of old did not act in this way. If they were accidentally killed when they were beating them in anger, the ancestors of old did not call this murder; therefore they did not punish those who beat them to death.

178 Our punishment for illicit intercourse between relatives and with a person of another
684 race was outcasting, and so it is now also. Nowadays this is also slackening off with us; some persons quite confidently act in this way; the people do not do them anything.

Formerly the Santals did not steal; but nowadays they have learnt this also from the
177 Dekus. From former times only one kind of theft is remembered, viz., to steal and eat
178 sheep or goats. When such animals had gone astray anywhere, then the whole village
685 population would kill and eat them when they found them, and the village headman they would give a double share. If this was proved, they would then restore the head (give a fresh animal instead), and would fine them five four-anna bits each. Nowadays they take all to the smooth verandah (i. e., the courts).

178 Abortus provocatus we have had from old times. They were doing this when birth
682 would be improper (on social indications). If it is proved, we fine both the medicine giver and the treated one ten rupees each. Nowadays we take such crimes to the courts. If they defame anybody without cause, they will have to pay five rupees to wipe off the defamation and five four-anna bits to the village council. The crime of sodomy is the act
178 of drunk men only. Formerly we gave such men an awful thrashing and fined them ten
684

2; Skreforud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

rupees. Nowadays who can say whether they take them to the courts or not? Besides this we have a couple of shameful sins that are not publicly mentioned. 178 684

When anyone has caused any loss, we make them pay the price or the estimated damage, and we also fine them. We fine both who strike each other, when both are guilty, otherwise one of them. If bullocks or cows butt and kill each other, we take the one who caused the death; and if anyone kills a bullock by ploughing or beating it, we make him pay its price. Anyone who falsely complains or makes a claim, him we punish contrarily. Those who without cause backbite people, we fine heavily. 685

A girl who commits the fault of mounting a tree in the sacred grove, or of entering the sacred closet in a man's house, will have to give a sacrifice animal. 688

When there is a dispute in connexion with the boundaries, the Pargana and the village headmen of the neighbourhood come together and settle the matter; and when there is a dispute in connexion with riceland, the village headman and the village council settle the matter. They fine the guilty person. These two kinds of mutual robbing have spread over the whole country through the instigation of the Dekos; otherwise formerly we had no such quarrels. Nowadays the Dekos also rob us of our villages; they both encroach on our boundaries and steal our riceland. People say: The Dekos enter like a needle, and they swell to be as large as a plough-share. They are also making us rob each other and quarrel. Where they are, there is no peace. Causing false evidence to be given in the courts, they rob us of all we have; and the magistrates do not understand our language; therefore we shall probably some day in the future again have to run away somewhere. If Deko cats were not living among Santals, it would be good for us Santals. 177 178 686 829

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Desh-pròdhan and his inter village council 634

The second court of appeal in Santal tribal law 692
is presided over by a Desh-Pròdhan having jurisdiction over about twenty villages. The unwritten [623]
Santal procedure code requires that the president of [622]
the tribunal should be assisted by a "Mònjèn hòr" (village elders) representing the villages under him, as well as the Headman of the village from whom the case came by way of reference or from the appeal of the party aggrieved by the decision of the village court. The cases tried here on reference are [684]
generally complicated ones, as the case of an unmarried mother, the paternity of whose child the village Headman is unable to trace, and bigger social disputes about tribal customs or usage during religious or social functions. This higher tribunal sits only occasionally, being either convened by the president himself on his own initiative, or on being moved by the aggrieved party. Such a president is selected by the villages constituting his constituency, and he is irremovable till his death.[1]

1. As regards the reference to the *Desh-Pròdhan*, we had an interesting tug-of-war during our investigation in Mayurbhanj, when a *Pròdhan* (Headman) stoutly refused to admit that the aggrieved party himself had any right of appeal to the *Desh-Pròdhan*, maintaining that the court of appeal could only be set in motion by the Headman's reference alone. We undertook extensive inquiries but found the weight of opinion overwhelming against the claim of the Headman.

3t Mukherjee O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

The offender also offers *pujas* to his own god by sacrificing a fowl. Finally, he is taken back to his tribal fold after entertaining the Headman and the village elders at a feast. 688 783

Santal tribal customs prescribe various measures of such purification, and considering their magnitude, they deserve separate treatment in another publication. They have even penances for a man attacked with leprosy. Our scope forbids us to enter into the plethora of these tribal taboos. But we should deal in detail with the tribal purification known as *Bitlabà* that follows a marriage or union within the clan or with non-Santals. 783

"Bitlabà" in the Santal Parganas[1]

In recent times, a very curious form of social ostracism named *Bitlabà* prevailing among the Santals of Santal Parganas came to public notice with some of its disturbing repercussions on public peace and tranquillity. This is a tribal purification of those who break the Santal marriage-laws, and a discussion on its nature and significance may prove interesting. [684]

1. This is quoted from the author's article on "*Bitlaba*" or "Santal Social Ostracism," published in the Mayurbhanj Chronicle.

St Mukherjea O. Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

614 Ever since the formation of the clans, while the
• 684 early Santal fathers were migrating from Hihiri Pipiri to Harata and Sasan beda, inter-marriage amongst the members of the clans was prohibited according to Santal traditions as we read in the *Hòṛkorèn Mare Haṛamko Reak' Katha*. It meant that a Kisku boy could not marry a Kisku girl of the same totem and *vice versa*, nor could he marry within the prohibited degrees specially fixed by custom. If he did, the tribal customary laws required that he and she should be excommunicated. And this has still continued to be as rigid and inexorable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Added to this, the marriage-laws required that Santal girls should never be given in marriage to non-Santals called *Deko* by the tribe, nor would they tolerate extra-marital unions.

684 According to Santal tribal laws, whenever a
622 person is detected to have entered into a union
692 falling into the categories described above, the Headman of the village is bound to inform the Headmen of the neighbouring villages to meet in a conference. At this meeting, evidence regarding the guilt of the parties is adduced; and if the case is *prima facie* proved, the Headmen circularise their respective villages to boycott the offenders by refusing to dine with them or by having any other social intercourse with them, till the case is finally

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

decided. The penalty for non-observance of this law is that they would be socially ostracised themselves. 684 622 692

The venue of the final trial rests on the tribal chiefs and various other officials of the tribe who assemble together during their general hunting season in the month of Santal *Pata Cando* (swinging festival known as Còròk) At this big Santal assembly, the case is reopened and the parties are asked to adduce evidence in support of their case. If, however, the accused pleads guilty, there is an end of the matter, and he or she, as the case may be, is fined or ostracised. If the fine is not paid within the date fixed, ostracism takes place in lieu of fine. [623] [224] [796]

When the parties are found guilty by the assembly, the Headman, who took cognisance of the offence initially, gets his credit, but if the evidence shows that the accused persons are not guilty, he is himself seriously punished.

When a verdict of guilt is passed, a general decree of excommunication is issued and a date is fixed for the ceremony. The date and place of *Bitlahà* is communicated through the entire tribe by means of a branch of a *Sal*-tree conveyed on the shoulders of a Santal from one village to another, from one market-place to another; outside their pale few know the significance of this mysterious notice. 684 [202] [211]

s Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

• 684 Then a bamboo pole is fixed in the house of the offender as a mark of social disgrace, and a leaf of a tree, on which someone has dined, is hung from this post. The youngmen of the village compose satirical songs and lampoons with the names of the accused persons; and on the day appointed, thousands and thousands of Santals enter into the yard of the offender singing ribald songs with pipe and kettle-drum accompaniments. They dance with war-drums brandishing half-burnt logs of wood and broomsticks of various shapes and sizes, and thus make the lives of the accused unendurable.

What a horrible business this *Bitlabà* is, nobody can adequately describe. Sometimes whole villages are deserted when they find themselves to be the targets of the tribal attack. The tribal laws lay it down that the particular village, which has violated the tribal taboo, is to be considered as defiled unless they pay up the fine. So to escape from coming troubles, and to save the prestige of their female-folk from listening to the *Bitlabà*-songs, they prefer to keep away till the mass tribal excommunication is over. And the condition of the accused persons can be better imagined than described; for, if any co-villager is discovered to have helped him or her, even with such things as fire and water, a similar fate only awaits him.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

So to preserve the decorum of the village during *Bitlabà*, custom lays it down that if the Headman of a village which is to be publicly disgraced thus, receives the mass of Santals with a pot of water as a token of penance, they will desist from singing the obscene songs and will carry out the rest of the programme.

What is dangerous for the State is that during a *Bitlabà*, mass tribal movements are seen throughout the Santal Parganas. Sometimes the infuriated mobs commit excesses of various kinds and many such cases roll into the courts. Again, there are times when the Santal takes it into his head to commit *Bitlabà* on non-Santals. Now, speaking in terms of Santal customary law, non-Santals are beyond their pale, but who can stop the Santal when his passion has been roused? He does not listen to arguments and several years ago the authorities had to quell a disturbance at the Godda subdivision of the Santal Parganas, where tens of thousands of Santals had assembled to lead a *Bitlabà* against some offending non-Santal residents. Our picture of a tribal ferment during a contemplated social ostracism is not at all an exaggerated one. It created so great a flutter that Santals from Monghyr, Bhagalpur and even Rajmahal marched on to join the movement at Godda.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

At Mayurbhanj

684 184 [579] Our enquiries at Mayurbhanj revealed the existence of this institution, the only difference being that no general unrest was reported within recent memory attending the execution of the tribal punishment, so as to endanger the peace of the land. 692 623 634 684 Here also the parties adduce evidence before the *Panchayet*, and more serious cases are referred to the inter-village council and thence, if necessary, to the Supreme Court during the tribal hunt or the parliament at *Mòkòrbasi*.

684 783 [346] The special feature of the Mayurbhanj programme includes installation of a *càndàl* (a temple-like structure made of *Sal* wood) in which straw or mud images of the delinquents are placed, whereas their clothes are hung outside. Then amidst music and beat of drums the ceremony of penance is performed.

Restoration to the Tribal fold

The men who are thus excommunicated are prohibited from any social intercourse with the others as dining and getting their children married. Thus harassed by the villagers, the boycotted persons sometimes leave the village to save themselves and their progeny from ignominy. The position of those who were outcasted for having sexual connexion with people of other races is the worst, for they are

3i Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

684 783

not taken back to the tribal fold even on undergoing a ceremony of expiation.

The *modus operandi* of the restoration to the tribe can be thus described:—

The outcaste, as the most essential preliminary, first corrects himself thoroughly and then gives up what the society objected to. Next, he provides for the necessary fines and incidental costs of the ceremony of purification. Thus equipped, he informs the village elders; and on a fixed date the tribe assembles at the cross-road of the village. The offender looks very repentant, folds his hands in a mood of supplication. He bathes and carries water in a pitcher with five holes. Thereafter, a propitiatory ceremony is performed in honour of *Dhòròm* (*Siñ Boṅga*) and *Maraṅ Buru* who are invoked by an *Obòr Murmu*. An uncastrated goat is offered to the deity. The offending man and woman pay a fine of Re. 1-4 ans. each and the sum is divided amongst the village elders. The cloths of the outcasted man and woman are then taken round the *hat* (market) to the *Jòl-ghat* (bathing place) by some, and for this they are paid a annas each as fine by the guilty couple. Now, the people assembled rinse their mouths with water from the pitcher and drink *hàṇḍia* (rice-beer). The pitcher and cloths are then thrown into water amidst cries of *haribol* by the tribe. [782]

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

684 All this time a tribal feast is in preparation at the cost of the offender at his house. The tribe assembles there. The outcaste washes the feet of the village elders, and thereafter serves the food personally to the tribe assembled. After the feast, the "Mòṇṛèn hòṛ" (the village elders) address the couple saying, "Henceforth you are parted. But should you unite again, you will be fined Rs. 25 each and driven out of the country." They then dig a hole and bury cowdung there or they may simply deposit some cow-dung on the place of the feast. In conclusion, the village-priest offers three fowls to the gods *Jahèr era*, "Mòntènko" and *Maraṅ Buru* so that they may purify the village from the sin committed by the guilty couple, now formally divorced.

782 793 783

Conclusion

181 619 783 784

The tribal psychology behind these proceedings is not very difficult to be understood. The Santals, like other *Muṇḍà* tribes, consider their tribal solidarity and strength to be their first concern. In the preservation of this tribal entity from conscious or unconscious pollution, they are fired by a primitive fanaticism and they take all measures whereby, they think, they can purify the tribe as a whole, as intrigues beyond the permitted degrees and unions with foreigners serve as the medium of supernatural

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

105 182 431 being an evidence of fraternal virtues of co-operation.

105 181 421 836 Although ideas of individualism have saturated the Santal social fabric and they now own private property, and have personal ownership over many things, communistic ideas in origin can be easily traced in the custom which allows all bachelors of the tribe to have free access and intercourse with the unmarried girls of the tribe barring of course customary prohibited degrees and relations.

105 593 Evidence of discipline in family life can be easily noticed. Their heads of families are held in great esteem and their commands are carried out [611] respectfully. Although the family is patrilineal and patripotestal, the mother has her natural voice in the family-life and women, notwithstanding all their legal disabilities, have their moral rights assured.

105 181 582 Nowhere is the democratic authority of the appointed guardians of the tribe in better evidence than in the cases of marriage regulations. It is in the administration of these that we can see the will of the Santals finds fullest play. We have seen in the foregoing pages how clan-incest is detested and how the erring ones undergo penance and restored to the tribe. It is the tribal council, the sacred [623] repository of all customs and traditions, that main- [684] tains intact the tribal solidarity and purity by out-casting the man and woman who have become

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

mediums of pollution to the tribe and thereby to its security and well-being. The Santal does not take recourse to such social ostracism so much from motives of punishment as from a sense of defence against some external sin visiting the tribe; and by restoring the delinquent to the tribal fold, they want to communicate afresh the "mana" (taboo-holiness) which he was supposed to have lost by his action.

In conclusion we may say that there is a close inter-relation between the material culture, the social organization and the tribal government of the Santals. By taking recourse to various means the Santal has, in his own way, solved the problem of the struggle for existence. This we have seen in detail in the chapter on "Economic Life." Here we have seen how by their tribal polity, they have devised measures as to how to live an orderly life to achieve that security without which life on earth degenerates into the anarchy of the jungle.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

582 614 never marries a Murmu female or a Murmu male respectively. Similarly a Tudu male never marries a Besra female and vice verse. An old Santal of Tudu sept told me the following tradition explaining why inter-marriage is not allowed between the Tudu and Besra septs.

582 614 539 Once a woman of Besra sept fell in love with a Tudu man, but the man did not agree to marry as the Besra sept is lower. Then the relatives of the man and woman made an agreement that if between the fight of their sept-animals, buffalo and cock, the cock would lose its life then there would be marriage. On the fixed day before the relatives of the both sides this fight took place. The headman of the village holding the pointed horn of the buffalo in one hand and the cock in another asked the permission of the men on both sides, and when they gave an answer in the affirmative, he let them loose and a fight then ensued between the cock and the buffalo. In the fight the cock took out the two eye-balls of the buffalo with its pointed beak, in consequence of which the buffalo lost its life. Thence no marriage was allowed between the two septs. But now no such restriction can be found.

582 584 836 684 [848] Girls are married as adults mostly to men of their own choice. Sexual intercourse before marriage is tolerated ; but if a girl becomes pregnant the young man is bound to marry her. Should he attempt to evade this obligation he would be liable to severe punishment by the Jogmanjhi, and in addition to this his father would be required to pay a heavy fine.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

597 of the boy renounce him and declare him henceforth to belong to the new father; it is also declared that the boy shall have no right of inheritance in the property of his natural father. When all this has been done the adopting father fixes a date for the formal adoption of the boy. The villagers of that village on that day behave as at Janam Chhatiar (name-giving ceremony of the Santal child). They shave and drink handi (rice beer). The usual procedure in a Janam Chhatiar is that the officiating midwife tells the assembled people the name of the new-born child; here she does not tell the name of the boy but the sept or sub-sept of the adopting father; henceforth that becomes the sept of the boy. Thereupon they leave the boy to eat the flesh of animals sacrificed to the tribal deities. Henceforward the boy becomes their own.

[302] [273] [614] [782]

• 684 627 **Bitlaha**: It means to outcast a Santal from society. This outcasting takes place by the order of the assembled members of the Panchayat. It is resorted to when a Santal woman indulges in sexual intercourse with either a diku (non-Santal) or with a person of the same sept. If any one commits such an offence the headman of the village in question calls his neighbouring colleagues together and informs them of the matter; if the people hold that the case is not proven, then those who started the rumour are severely punished. If it is proved, the assembly gives an order for outcasting and they proceed to carry it out the day after the annual hunt. The date of this Bitlaha is announced by a man in the market who carries a branch of a Sal tree (Shorea robusta) with leaves. The people in the market on seeing him understand the matter and count the leaves

[622] [689] [211] [824]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

684 •
627
[211]
[824]
[114]

of the branch (each leaf of the branch means a day) because as many leaves as it contains so many days afterwards this bitlaha is to take place. During this operation the Parganait of that bunglow and even the Sub-divisional officer of that district are generally commissioned to superintend so that nothing untoward happens. One such outcasting I saw personally about two years ago at Dumka within the Santal Pargana.

In the early morning of the appointed day the bachelors and other male members of the neighbouring villages with flutes, drums, bows and arrows meet at the end of the village street where the culprit lives. The bachelors compose extempore obscene songs in which he is mentioned by name. Drumming is kept up so terribly that the sound can be heard for miles around. At a sign from the leader the crowd with wild yells and lifted hands holding bows rushes towards the village, drumming and blowing their flutes loudly and singing obscene songs. The women of that village do not remain there; they go away to some other place to keep their prestige.

When the crowd reaches the house of the offender they tie a short charred bit of firewood, a worn-out broom and some used leaf-plates on a long pole of bamboo and fix it at the entrance to the courtyard. Within the courtyard they break the fireplace and all things and even sometimes break the house. Young men in undress desecrate the rooms.

The persons outcasted are not allowed to take food with others, they cannot give their children in marriage within the Santal community. The parents of both sides also would be outcasted, and those who give shelter to these outcasts will be treated like-wise.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

Santal Administrative Officer.

Manjhi (Headman) : The basis of the Santal communal system is the village. Santals will never settle alone in an uncultivated area ; they go there in a body and settle with a leader and his assistants. The leader is known as *Manjhi* (headman), being chosen by the village people to administer the rights, rules and ceremonies of the Santal village community. No public sacrifice, no festival, no ceremony such as marriage can properly be done without the *Manjhi* taking the lead or initiative. The *Manjhi* is the representative of the village both in external and internal affairs. He also collects rents from the villagers. If the headman of a Santal village be other than a Santal (such as Kumar or Bauri) which sometimes happens, the Santals will have for themselves an official called *Handi Manjhi* who performs all the duties of the Santal village except collecting rent and other work demanded by the Government.

621
622
[796]
[427]

Assistant to the Headman-Paramanik Jogmanjhi : There are two assistants to the *Manjhi*, one is *Paramanik* and the other is the *Jogmanjhi*. The *Paramanik* is the principal assistant and representative of the *Manjhi* by whom he is chosen. If the *Manjhi* dies without any male issue or brothers then the *Paramanik* will get the office. In his (*Manjhi's*) social functions the *Manjhi* is assisted by the *Jogmanjhi*. His duty to prevent sexual intercourse in the same sept and also with a *diku* (non-Santal). If a girl becomes pregnant the *Jogmanjhi* has to find out who the culprit is. If he does not, the villagers tie him with the rope used for tying a buffalo to a pole in the cowshed of the *Manjhi* and scold him and fine him.

624
[684]
[686]

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

586 [606] her while she could be of service to them, but would return her to her husband after a lapse of two or three months. They settled down to normal married life after the mother-in-law had become aged and enfeebled by rheumatism. Sometimes a wife who suffers from continuous fever refuses to stay in her husband's home, and if there are other causes of discontent her refusal may become permanent, in which case her father has to return the bride price and she becomes free to marry elsewhere.

•684 Although the standards of Santal morality allow for a wide variety of sexual behaviour, once those standards have been flouted society can be fiercely intolerant. In the spring of 1939 a daughter of the village priest at Barikul who was married to a "house son-in-law" was discovered in the act of having sexual intercourse with a young man of the same village in the adjoining forest. There was some delay in taking action, for the headman from the aggrieved husband's village was asked to attend the council. The elders meanwhile extorted a preliminary fine of ten rupees from the guilty man, at which the young men were enraged. One of them said: "When we are guilty of small faults you fine us five rupees; in future you should take only five annas from us." When the council met, the amount of the fine was raised to sixty rupees. This was raised within two hours by the man selling all the livestock that he possessed. Of this sum, five rupees was for the villagers of Barikul, five rupees for the fellow villagers of the aggrieved husband, and the balance was paid to the aggrieved husband to enable him to find another wife. He was also allowed to collect from the home certain things that he had earned while living there—a spade, an axe and the [586] brass cooking utensils. Ordinarily when a home is broken up such [587] things are divided between the husband and the wife. On the same evening a party of the villagers accompanied him to a neighbouring village and completed a marriage ceremony for him with a new wife. Most of the usual formalities were omitted, but a bride price was paid and the marriage sealed. The guilty man was required to take the wife into his own home, but when next day the villagers found that this had not been done they went to the priest's home, where they found the young woman lying on the floor seriously ill. In spite of her condition, they took her down to her paramour's home, only to be met by his irate wife and mother brandishing axes. She was taken back to her own home and the council was again summoned. The elders by [762] now had become seriously alarmed by the possibility of violence, and were relieved rather than otherwise when word was brought

MARRIAGE

that the girl had died. Evidence showed that she had that morning taken poison in the form of oleander seeds, which furnish an easy means of taking poison. Their efforts were now directed towards the necessity for deciding how to report her death. In every village there is a *chowkidar*, or village policeman, appointed by the government, one of his duties being to report births and deaths. The villagers solemnly debated with him whether they should report the truth and trust to the possibility of bribing the *daroga*, or police inspector, in order to escape further inquiry, but they decided in the end to suppress the truth and save trouble. The girl was buried deep in the forest without ceremony, and her death was later reported as being due to fever. The council then decided that they would inflict the traditional penalty for adultery on her paramour. This is twofold. Images of the two guilty persons are made and carried through the village; and, in addition, heavy stones are attached to the genitals of the man, who is then made to walk through the village. In this case he took the remedy into his own hands by summarily leaving the village, to which he did not return till the lapse of several months had served to cool the general indignation.